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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Reserve

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

FEB 14 '79

Issue #12
May 30, 1975

MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

MANAGEMENT COUNCIL ACTIONS.....

Executive Development Highlights of May 15 Council Meeting.....

Government-wide retirement rate for employees at the \$36,000 income level is between 33% and 175% higher than that for all retirees.....Preliminary CSC data for June 1974 - October 1974 and November 1974 - January 1975 indicate that the percent of actual retirees to those eligible to retire was:

<u>Category</u>	<u>6/74-10/74</u>	<u>11/74-1/75</u>
For all employees	10%	7%
For those earning \$36,000/annum	14%	20%
For those earning \$36,000/annum and between 55 and 59 years old	17%	23%

If the trend continues, the retirement rate for executives and managers at the \$36,000 level could reach 50% within two years. (From remarks by Assistant Secretary J. Wright about a recent government-wide CSC session on Executive Development.)

Large Percentage of USDA Managers and Executives are Eligible for Retirement in the 1974-1978 Period:

<u>GRADE:</u>	<u>GS-18</u>	<u>GS-17</u>	<u>GS-16</u>	<u>GS-15</u>	<u>GS-14</u>	<u>OVERALL</u>
<u>PERCENT ELIGIBLE:</u>	48%	40%	46%	46%	33%	38%

(Exhibit II-A of McMannis Associates, Inc. Report on Executive Development in USDA)

Highlights of May 29 Council Meeting.....

- Council Comments Generally Favorable About the Contents and Recommendations Presented in the McManis Executive Development Report (see issue #11 for Recommendations).....Council members will transmit their detailed written comments about the report to J.P. Bolduc for his consideration and further discussion at a future council meeting.

- Council to Host Special Optional Information Sessions on Existing USDA Executive Development Systems.....APHIS, AMS, ARS and FS personnel will be invited to explain their executive development tools that were noted in the McManis Report to interested council members. No dates have been set.

NEW PROGRAM PLANNING MANAGEMENT PROCESS UNDERWAY.....As announced by Mr. Wright in his May 6 memo to agency heads, the process began on May 13 with meetings between Departmental analytical staffs and key agency personnel. These meetings were concluded on May 28 and surfaced critical program issues and problems. These will be reviewed with the policy staff on June 1 and 2 at Camp David. Specific policy guidance resulting from this process will be provided to agencies in June for use in preparing fiscal year 1977-81 program and financial plans. (Contact: Stephen Dewhurst, OMF, ext. 73045.)

RECENT SIGNIFICANT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS.....

- Effective July 1, food stamp allotments and income eligibility standards will be increased by 5% (from \$154 to \$162 and from \$513 to \$540 monthly income respectively for a family of four) to reflect last February's survey of the cost of the economy food plan. (Contact: Orval Kerchner, FNS, ext. 78031.)
- With the initialing of a "Memorandum of Understanding" in Taipei, May 10, 1975, the USDA/State Department technical team successfully concluded its mission to obtain assurance that letter of credit will be opened on all outstanding U.S. cotton contracts for Korea, the Philippines and Taiwan. (Contact: Arnold Beasley, FAS, ext. 75383.)

RECENT LEGISLATION

TRAVEL EXPENSE BILL SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT.....The Travel Expense Bill of 1975, P.L. 94-22, became law following President Ford's signature last Wednesday. The Bill increases the per diem and mileage allowances presently covered by GSA regulations. (See OMF Notice OMF-F-12, dated May 22, 1975, for details on the Bill.) (Contact: Leo Palensky, OMF, ext. 77251.)

PRESIDENT VETOES STRIP MINING BILL.....As part of his energy program, President Ford vetoed the Strip Mining Bill last Friday. Provisions of the Bill would have authorized:

- establishment of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement;
- grants-in-aid to State mining and mineral resources and research institutes;
- abandoned mine reclamation;
- control of environmental impacts of surface coal mining; and
- designation of lands unsuitable for non-coal mining and various necessary administrative and miscellaneous provisions.

(Contact: Amos Martinez, OMF, ext. 73671.)

CENTRAL SERVICES

ADDITIONAL \$1.25 MILLION TO BE REBATED.....Based on estimated year-end income and expenses, users of WCC and NOCC will receive additional rebates of \$550,128 and \$699,969 respectively. These will be reflected in the April billings. (Contact: H.W. Meetze, OADS, ext. 76275.)

PERSONNEL

OI FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING.....As part of its internal Financial Management, OI brought its budget clerks to the Washington area for a four-day training session May 27 to May 30. The training primarily concerned proper preparation of obligation reports and allied monetary monthly reports. (Contact: Rod Elam, OI, ext. 75241.)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM FIELD VISIT.....As part of the on-going Departmental effort to meet 8(a) goals, OEO Procurement Specialists met with the Minority Business Opportunity Committee (MBOC) chairman and FS Regional Office staff in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on May 19. Processing 8(a) minority business contracts and the current operational effectiveness of the MBOC were among the subjects discussed. (Contact: Fred King, OEO, ext. 77117.)

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

INFORMATION ON COUNTY OFFICES COMPILED BY OO.....Recent statistics, submitted by 51 State Administrative Committees, on agricultural service centers and USDA county offices show that:

- 94% of counties in the United States have at least one local office of ASCS, FCIC, FmHA, or SCS.
- 48% of these counties have all USDA offices in the county colocated under one roof.
- 881 service center locations have been recommended to agency heads from SAC's.
- 61% of these recommended sites have all agencies already under one roof.
- Full-time local offices:

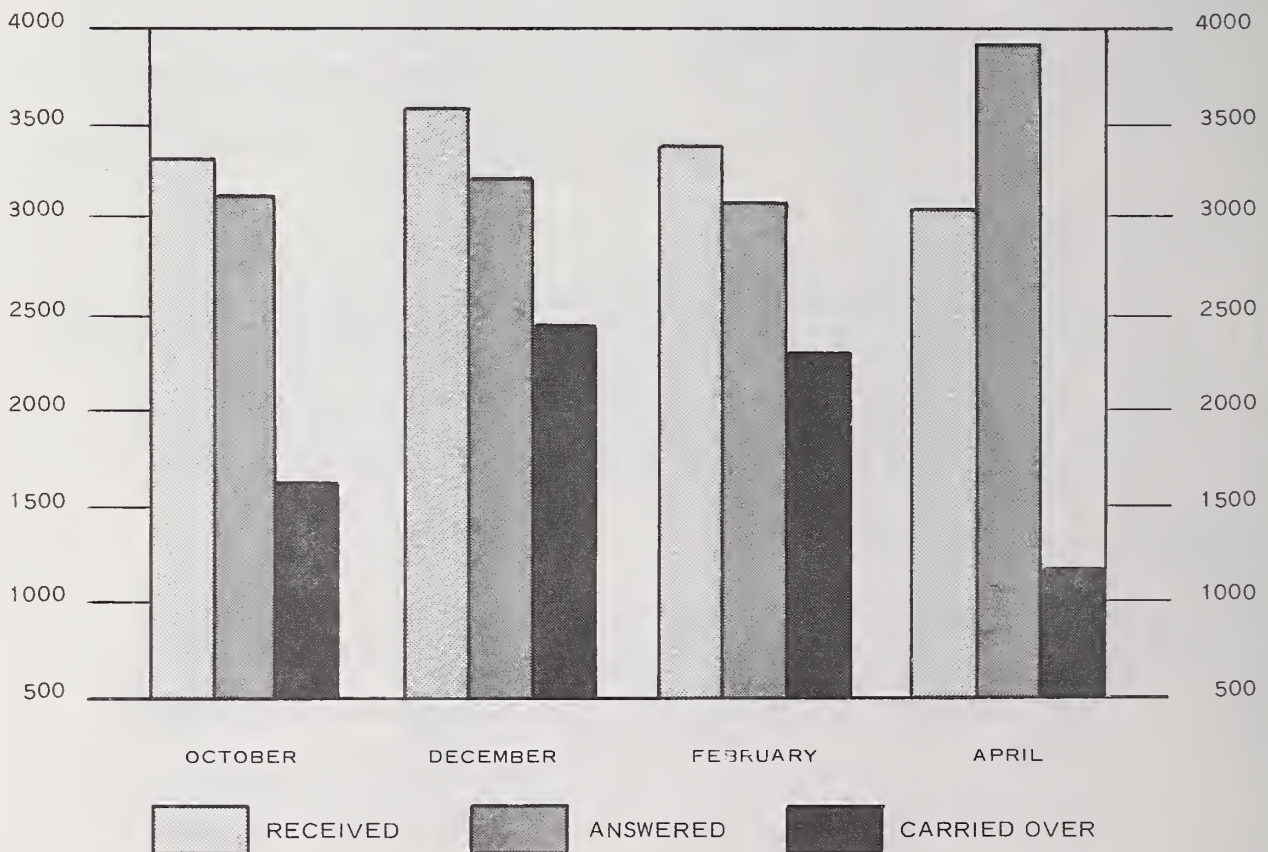
<u>ASCS</u>	<u>ES</u>	<u>FCIC</u>	<u>FmHA</u>	<u>SCS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
2,825	3,151	312	1,749	3,012	11,049

(Contact: Dick Hadsell, OO, ext. 74394.)

ANSWERS TO CONTROLLED CORRESPONDENCE MORE TIMELY IN APRIL.....The percent of mail answered on time for each month shown below is as follows: October 50%, December 31%, February 42%, and April 54%. Significantly, the pending backlog at the end of April was reduced to 566 answers overdue and 677 not overdue. A decrease in incoming correspondence helped.

PIECES OF
CORRESPONDENCE

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Of the agencies receiving controlled correspondence in April:

- 12 answered 75% or more on time;
- 7 answered 50%-75% on time;
- 6 answered 25%-50% on time;
- 1 answered 15% on time (has 137 overdue);
- 1 answered none on time (has 7 overdue).

Timeliness needs to be emphasized continually -- for both acknowledgments and final replies. (Contact: Jerry Pepper, 00, Ext. 78393.)